

Sūrah Ad-Duḥā

(The Forenoon)

This Sūrah is Makkī, and it has 11 verses

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

With the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful

Verses 1 - 11

وَالضُّحَىٰ ﴿١﴾ وَاللَّيلٌ إِذَا سَجَىٰ ﴿٢﴾ مَا وَدَعَكَ رَبُّكَ وَمَا قَلَىٰ ﴿٣﴾
 وَلَلَّا خَرَةٌ خَيْرٌ لَكَ مِنَ الْأُولَىٰ ﴿٤﴾ وَلَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضِىٰ
 ﴿٥﴾ إِنَّمَا يَجِدُكَ يَتِيمًا فَأَوْيٰ ﴿٦﴾ وَوَجَدَكَ ضَالًّا فَهَدَىٰ ﴿٧﴾
 وَوَجَدَكَ عَائِلًا فَأَعْنَىٰ ﴿٨﴾ فَامَّا الْيَتِيمُ فَلَا تَقْهِرْ ﴿٩﴾ وَامَّا السَّائِلُ
 فَلَا تُنْهِرْ ﴿١٠﴾ وَامَّا بِنْعَمَةٍ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ ﴿١١﴾

I swear by the forenoon, [1] and by the night when it becomes peaceful, [2] your Lord (O Holy Prophet,) has neither forsaken you, nor has become displeased. [3] And the Hereafter is much better for you than the present life. [4] And of course, your Lord will give you so much that you will be pleased. [5] Did He not find you an orphan, and give you shelter? [6] And He found you unaware of the way (the Shari‘ah), then He guided you. [7] and He found you in need, then made you need-free. [8] Therefore, as for orphan, do not oppress him, [9] and as for the beggar, do not scold him. [10] And about the bounty of your Lord, do talk. [11]

Commentary

Occasion of Revelation

Bukhārī, Muslim and Tirmidhī have narrated from Sayyidnā Jundub

that once a finger of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was wounded and started bleeding, he said:

ان انت الا اصبع دميت وفي سبيل الله مالقيت

'You are merely a finger that is bleeding; [what does it matter] if you are hurt: it all happened in Allah's cause.'

Sayyidnā Jundub رضي الله عنه narrated this incident and said that revelation of the Qur'ān to the Holy Prophet ﷺ came to a halt, and that Jibrā'il عليه السلام stopped coming to him for a while. The unbelievers taunted, saying: "Muhammad's Lord has forsaken him, and is displeased with him." Sūrah Ad-Duḥā was revealed on this occasion. According to the narration in Bukhari by Sayyidnā Jundub رضي الله عنه, the Holy Prophet ﷺ was unable to wake up for a few nights for *tahajjud* prayer owing to illness. In this narration, there is no mention of 'delay in revelation'. In Timidhi's narration, there is mention about the 'delay in revelation' but no mention about his inability to wake up for *tahajjud* prayer. These reports are not conflicting. The narrator might have narrated one incident at one time, and reported another incident at another time. The lady who taunted the Holy Prophet ﷺ was Umm Jamīl, the wife of Abū Lahab, as other reports indicate. 'Delay in revelation' took place twice. Once in the very early stage of the call. This is known as *fatrah al-wahy* 'temporary break in the revelation'. This was the longest period. Another narration states that when the pagans or the Jews asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ about the soul, he promised them that he would give them a reply the next day. However, he forgot to add *insha 'Allah* (if Allah wills). As a result, revelation ceased for a few days. The pagans began to taunt the Holy Messenger ﷺ, saying that Allah had abandoned him, and is displeased with him. It was on this occasion that the Sūrah was revealed.

(وَلَآخِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأُولَى) (And the Hereafter is much better for you than the present life....93:4). The word '*ākhirah*' may be taken in its popular sense of the 'Hereafter' and its opposite '*ulā*' may be taken in the sense of the present 'world'. With these words, Allah tells the Holy Prophet ﷺ not to be disturbed by the taunts of the pagans, because they will see in this world that their assumptions and accusations were absolutely false. In the Hereafter, he will be blessed with Divine favours to his heart's content -

much more than what he will receive in this fleeting world. The word 'ākhirah may also be taken in its primitive sense i.e. 'the later state or condition' as opposed to 'ūlā 'the former state or condition'. The verse, in this case, would mean that every succeeding moment of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ life is better than the preceding one. It includes progress in knowledge and wisdom, as well as in degrees of his nearness to Allah, and it also includes progress in economic and political fields.

(وَلَسْوَفَ يُعْطِيكَ رِبُّكَ فَتَرْضِي) (And of course, your Lord will give you so much that you will be pleased....93:5). Allah does not specify here what he will give him. The statement is open and general. The Holy Prophet ﷺ will be granted everything he desires so much that he will be pleased. Among his desired thing is the progress of Islam; the general spread of Islam in the world; fulfilment of every need of the Ummah; triumph of the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself over his enemies and raising the word of Allah in the land of the enemy. When this verse was revealed, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

إِذَا لَا أَرْضِي وَوَاحِدٌ مِّنْ أَمْتَنِي فِي النَّارِ

'If that is the case, then I will not be pleased as long as one [single member] of my Ummah [remains] in Fire.' [Qurṭubī].

In a narration by Sayyidnā ‘Alī ﷺ, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: "Allah will accept my intercession for my Ummah [community]. Allah will ask: "يَارَبِّ رَضِيْتُ" [O Lord, I am pleased]" He will reply: "My Lord, I am pleased." Muslim records from Sayyidnā ‘Amr Ibn-ul-‘Āṣ to the effect that the Holy Prophet ﷺ recited a verse concerning the Prophet Ibrāhīm ﷺ:

فَمَنْ تَبْغِيْ فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي وَمَنْ عَصَانِي فَإِنَّكَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

'...So, one who follows me is surely mine, and the one who disobeys me, then You are Most Forgiving, Very Merciful.
[14:36]'

Then he recited a verse which contains the words of Sayyidnā ‘Isā ﷺ

إِنْ تُعَذِّبْهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عَبَادُكَ

'If You punish them, then, they are Your slaves [5:118]'

Then he raised his hands, he wept and prayed:

اللَّهُمَّ أَمْتَنِي أَمْتَنِي

'O Allah, my *ummah*, my *ummah*!'

Allah sent Jibra'il ﷺ to inquire as to why he was weeping [while Allah knows the reason]. Jibra'il Amin ﷺ came and inquired why he was weeping. The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied: "I seek my *ummah*'s forgiveness." Allah sent Jibra'il ﷺ back to inform him that He has pardoned them, and that Allah would please him and would not displease him regarding his *ummah*.

In response to the unbelievers' taunts, it was briefly mentioned that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has already been blessed with many Divine favours. The Sūrah elaborates on three of them in particular.

Favour [1]

أَلَمْ يَجِدْكَ يَتِيمًا فَأَوْرَى (Did He not find you an orphan, and give you shelter?...93:6). The Holy Prophet ﷺ was an orphan. His father died before he was born, leaving no wealth or property to look after him. The words 'and gave you shelter' signify that the Holy Prophet ﷺ received such deep love and affection from his grand-father, 'Abd-ul-Muṭṭalib, and after him from his uncle, Abū Ṭālib , who took care of him more than their own children.

Favour [2]

وَرَجَدَكَ ضَالًّا فَهَدَى (And He found you unaware of the way [the Shari'ah], then He guided you....93:7). The word *dāll* has two meanings: [1] stray; and [2] unaware. Here it stands for the second meaning. The verse signifies that before Muḥammad ﷺ was commissioned as the Prophet, he was unaware of Divine Shari'ah. He was granted the status of the Prophet ﷺ and thus was guided.

Favour [3]

وَرَجَدَكَ عَابِلًا فَاغْنَى (and He found you in need, then made you need-free....93:8). The word 'āil is derived from 'ailah which means 'to be in need'. The verse signifies that Allah found him impoverished and enriched him. This happened in the beginning through a business partnership with Sayyidah Khadījah al-Kubrā رضي الله عنها, then once she became his wife and 'Mother of the Faithful', her entire wealth was

devoted to his service.

After elaborating on the three favours of Allah, three injunctions follow:

Injunction [1]

فَإِنَّمَا الظَّيْمَ فَلَا تَنْهَىٰ (Therefore, as for orphan, do not oppress him,...93:9). The word *qaḥr* means 'to treat people who are less powerful in an unfair and cruel way'. In the present context, the verse means: 'Since you were a poor orphan, and Allah sheltered you, do not oppress the orphan.' [In words, 'do not seize their wealth by force and squander it. Do not scorn them, humiliate them or despise them. Rather, you should be kind and gentle to them.']. As a result, the Holy Prophet ﷺ emphasised that the orphan be treated kindly and gently, and has forbidden any hurting attitude towards them. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said that the best house of a Muslim is the one in which there is an orphan who is treated kindly, and with love and affection. The worst house is the one in which there is an orphan who is treated badly. [This is transmitted by Bukhārī in Al-Adab-ul- Mufrad, and by Ibn Mājah and Baghawī, as quoted by Mažhari].

Injunction [2]

وَأَمَّا السَّائِلُ فَلَا تَنْهَىٰ (and as for the beggar, do not scold him....93:10). The verb *tanhar* is derived from *nahr* which means 'to scold'. The word *sā'il* means 'one who asks'. It includes a person who asks people's wealth, that is, a beggar, and it also includes the one who asks a question of knowledge, that is, an academic investigator. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has forbidden to berate either of them. The best course of action is to give the beggar something. If one is unable to give a beggar anything, one should at least apologise to him politely [so as not to give him any further grief]. Likewise, anyone who is searching knowledge and asks questions, it is forbidden to respond to him harshly and unkindly. The teacher should reply kindly and politely. However, if the investigator is unreasonable in his approach, it is permissible to scold him to the degree that is necessary.

Injunction [3]

وَأَمَّا بِعْضَمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِثْ (And about the bounty of your Lord, do talk....93:11). The verb *ḥaddith* is derived from *taḥdīth* which means 'to talk' meaning,

'just as you were poor and needy, and Allah made you wealthy, then talk about Allah's favours upon you'. Talking about Divine favours to people is one way of thanking Allah. If a person has done something good to another, he should be thanked. Therefore, the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said: "Whoever is not thankful to people on their favours is not thankful to Allah." [This is transmitted by Ahmad. The chain of authorities are reliable - vide Mažhari].

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said: "Whoever has done good to you, you ought to return the good. If you are unable to return the pecuniary good, then praise him in public, because he who praises people in public fulfils his moral obligation." [Al-Baghawī transmitted it from Jābir Ibn 'Abdullah, vide Mažhari].

Ruling

It is obligatory to offer gratitude to Allah on every favour He has bestowed. (But the way of offering gratitude may be different.) If Allah has granted a person wealth, a part of that wealth may be spent with the sincerity in Allah's way. If Allah has given a person strong body, his bodily strength may be utilised in fulfilling Divine obligations. If Allah has granted a person Divine knowledge, he should impart it to others. [Mažhari].

Ruling

It is *sunnah* to recite *takbīr* at the beginning of every Sūrah from Sūrah Duḥā to the end of the Qur'ān. The wordings of the *takbīr*, according to Shaikh Ṣalih al-Miṣrī, are as follows:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرٌ

'There is no god except Allah and Allah is the greatest'
[Mažhari].

According to Ibn Kathīr, the *takbīr* may be recited at the end of every Sūrah and, according to Baghawī, it may be recited once at the beginning of every Sūrah. [Mažhari]. Either way the requirement of *sunnah* will be fulfilled. And Allah knows best!

Note

In most Sūrahs from Sūrah Duḥā to the end of Qur'ān, Allah's special

favours upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his special virtues and characteristics are mentioned. In a few of the Sūrahs, the Day of Judgement and its conditions are mentioned. The earlier part of the Qur'ān asserts the greatness and authenticity of the Qur'ān, while the later part asserts the greatness of the personality to whom the Qur'ān was revealed.

**Alḥamdu lillah
The Commentary on
Sūrah Ad-Duḥā
Ends here**